

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL NORWALK CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON 8-27-15
(abridged for publication)

Mayor Phillips called the City Council meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. Present at roll call: Eric Delker, Tom Greteman, Erika Isley, Kyle Jackson and Jaki Livingston. Absent at roll call: none. (RC = roll call vote)

15-154 Delker moved, Livingston seconded, to approve the **agenda** as amended to remove discussion item 9. Voice vote carried unanimously.

15-155 Motion by Livingston, Greteman seconded, to **adopt Resolution 0827-15-079 approving a development agreement with Norwalk Land Company LLC** passed unanimously, RC.

15-156 Motion by Greteman, Isley seconded, to **adopt Resolution 0827-15-080 approving the request from Norwalk Land Company LLC for final plat of Norwalk Orchard View Plat 1** passed unanimously, RC.

15-157 Motion by Greteman, Delker seconded, to **adopt Resolution 0827-15-081 accepting improvements known as Norwalk Orchard View Plat 1** passed unanimously, RC.

Council discussed with staff the **personnel needs** of each department. Hoskins updated council with upcoming **water project** information. Council asked Kuehl to bring back information regarding the condition of the **city pool**.

15-158 Delker moved, Greteman seconded, to **adjourn** meeting at 7:17 p.m. Voice vote carried unanimously.

Tom Phillips, Mayor

Attest:

Jodi Eddleman, City Clerk

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(unabridged version)

Mayor Phillips called the City Council meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. Present at roll call: Eric Delker, Tom Greteman, Erika Isley, Kyle Jackson and Jaki Livingston. Absent at roll call: none. (RC = roll call vote)

Staff present included: Marketa Oliver, City Manager; Jodi Eddleman, City Clerk; Tim Hoskins, Public Works Director; Dustin Huston, Fire Chief; Nancy Kuehl, Parks and Recreation Director; Holly Sealine; Director of Library Services; Greg Staples, Police Chief; Wade Wagoner, Planning and Economic Development Director and Jim Dougherty, City Attorney.

Mayor Phillips said item 9, discussion of land use planning, would be removed from the agenda.

15-154 Delker moved, Livingston seconded, to approve the **agenda** as amended to remove discussion item 9. Voice vote carried unanimously.

Norwalk Orchard View

Wagoner distributed maps showing this subdivision and the vicinity. He noted that part of this development agreement dedicates parks and open spaces, in the area marked as Outlot Y, for a future stormwater detention facility that the city agrees to build.

Wagoner continued by saying the development agreement talks about plat sequencing to ensure the timely completion of Orchard Trail Drive. There is also language included for the connection to Wright Road. The developer has agreed to have his engineer design, and his construction crews build, the portion of the road that the city is responsible for in conjunction with this project. Initial estimates indicate cost to the city for this is \$10,000.

Wagoner added that the widening of Orchard Hills Drive from 28 feet to 31 feet, making it a collector, is also in the agreement. He stated the fee for the storm water connection is not to exceed \$3,000 per acre and that the city will do a supplemental agreement to address the issue of an additional three feet of sidewalk, making it a bike trail.

Jim Campney, Norwalk Land Company LLC, said the city talked about the possibility of a ten foot bike trail and the builders, that he contacted, did not like the idea of expanding the trail beyond eight feet.

Phillips asked if there would be sidewalk on both sides of street. Campney answered yes, eight feet wide on one side and five feet wide on the other.

Livingston asked for clarification that the park would be situated south of Orchard Hills Villas.

Greteman said he wants to understand where the 100 year and 500 year flood lines are; and if there is enough room to put park equipment there without it being under water half the time. Hoskins explained that the grade comes off the street then there is a steady slope down to the pond. Greteman said before the park is actually built the city will need to be comfortable with the engineering.

Isley asked if anything is currently budgeted for the detention pond and park equipment. Oliver answered yes. The pond is currently in design and fiscal year 17 capital plan includes park equipment.

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Staffing Levels Discussion

Oliver asked Wagoner to start the discussion and he reported that the Building Inspector is averaging thirteen inspections per day and provided council with information on workload comparisons from around the metro area, indicating the city's staff to work ratio is high.

Council and staff then talked about the nexus between the revenue of the building inspection fees collected and what that money can be spent on. Oliver stated that, for instance, a portion of the City Planner could be paid from the building inspection revenue because it is related to the service provided for that fee but not a police officer because there is no connection between the service the police officer provides and the permit fee to build a house.

Greteman asked Wagoner what he is proposing. Wagoner answered that his proposal is to hire one new person; as Tony Stravers, our current inspector, is allowed to have an apprentice work under his license, and he could train this new person as a Building Inspector. Wagoner also recommended promoting Stravers' to Chief Building Official.

Delker asked about the cost. Oliver answered for the building inspector, including salary and benefits, the total cost is between \$75,000 and \$80,000. Delker inquired if that takes a big enough chunk out of this revenue overage and Oliver indicated that there would also be a bump in the salary for the Building Official position, another vehicle would be required for the department and a portion of the City Planner's salary will be reallocated from here.

Delker concluded that this shows the Norwalk Building Inspector is doing 175% more than in other cities; the money is there in the general fund, this only slows the reserve growth; and he does not see the point for any further discussion.

Isley asked about the seasonality of this work and how busy will it be in down times. Greteman said the city needs to staff for the busy time.

Isley then stated she may not be in favor of adding more than one additional position for the city and Jackson said they should not forget about the vacant finance director position.

Greteman said he needs no more justification for adding a Building Inspector but would like to hear what everyone else has to say.

Oliver then asked Hoskins to present and he reported that Public Works has not added any staff since 2001. He provided information comparing workloads with surrounding cities showing staffing to lane miles ratios. He gave examples evidencing this deficiency by stating Public Works has a water valve exercise program that they were unable to do at all; they have only addressed a handful of hydrant repairs; and have hardly touched the sanitary sewer cleaning this year.

Hoskins provided council with information on how quickly the city is growing and compared other communities and duties. He also noted the number of preliminary plats in process, there will be significantly more infrastructure for which Public Works is responsible.

Jackson asked where Hoskins would utilize the additional employee. Hoskins said two employees primarily work in the water department because of certifications required and everyone is cross-trained.

Isley said the city hired a supervisor three years ago. Hoskins said yes that was to replace a vacant position. She then asked if the city hires temporary part-time workers. Hoskins answered they try but that it is very difficult to find qualified people looking for seasonal work, adding that last year the Iowa DOT tried to hire 300 workers and did not get even 150.

Jackson asked if the 311 lane miles reported includes Highway 28. Hoskins said no.

Greteman asked if Norwalk has that many more street miles than Johnston or Waukee. Hoskins confirmed saying a significant amount came from annexation and development, adding that 25 lane miles per employee in the metro is average, West Des Moines has slipped behind, and Norwalk is extremely deficient.

Hoskins reported that in a typical snow storm Public Works can get through all routes in 12 hours; but that will not be the case any longer as the city has grown to the point that will not be possible.

Phillips said with sewer and storm it looks like the city is adequately staffed and in water as well, but when you get to streets, the city is understaffed. Hoskins noted that Public Works does not have administrative support.

Jackson asked if adding an administrative staff person would help the public works employees. Hoskins said it would help him significantly.

Livingston asked Hoskins what he is asking for. Hoskins said three employees would get them back to where they were in 2001. Livingston then said that is not realistic and Hoskins said Public Works is severely understaffed and he will take what he can get.

Oliver said she would like to see one position added in Community Development and one to Public Works at this time. They could then take a look at the overall needs and make additional recommendations during the budget process.

Greteman said he would like to see one position added to public works and, if Hoskins is not hiring now, add a couple people in the budget; approving a staff person is now out ten months.

Livingston said she would like additional information about what Public Works has, what they do not have, what people are needed and what they would do. Hoskins said he could divide his monthly reports to show not only what they accomplish but also what they cannot get to, adding that they were going to initiate a city sidewalk inspection program that is pushed by the insurance company and they started it and could not get it finished.

Isley asked Hoskins what he would have this person do the first 60 or 90 days.

Jackson said we can look around our neighborhoods and see what is not getting done and see the needs of the Public Works Department. He said that he sees what has increased since 2001.

There was council consensus to have action items related to the Community Development Department proposals on the next council agenda.

Hoskins said he would like to wait to allow him to get the requested data to council. Delker said he would not like to see work pile up for the sake of getting information to council when the council is generally supportive of adding a position.

Isley said she wants to keep the tax levy stable and to see what adding a person in Public Works would do to reserves; but that adding two or more may lose her.

Jackson asked about the cost associated to add a position at Public Works and Oliver said it is between \$50,000 and \$55,000.

Greteman asked Oliver if she recommends council do this. Oliver answered yes, an additional staff member for Public Works for the budget that gets discussed in February. Greteman asked if the additional Building Inspector is also recommended for next year. Oliver said if that could be done sooner that would be good.

Staples provided information on the needs of the Police Department and Greteman shared that he will need to see how another police officer will be used before he is convinced to add a fifteenth officer. Staples said he would prefer eighteen; but at fifteen officers, the department can do much better giving the victim of a crime a thorough investigation and he will not request any more officers for a while. He then noted that if the city receives the COPS grant, that would be for the fifteenth officer.

Greteman asked Huston how the night shifts are going. Huston said the night shifts have been filled with our part-timers, but two have had only EMT basics and no paramedic.

Isley asked why and Huston explained the market is changing and most of the metro area is now paying up and up time and Norwalk may have to look at the up and up model to be competitive enough to continue filling the shifts.

Greteman asked if the preference is to have a paramedic per shift and Huston answered yes without a doubt; adding that if it becomes a problem he will bring it to council immediately.

Greteman then asked Staples if the police cars have AED's. Staples said yes and they have been able to revive three people with them since he has been here.

Discussion turned to Parks and Rec and Kuehl said she finds it hard to find seasonal mowers. It is too expensive to contract out and is wondering if hiring a Parks Supervisor would help, somebody who could be a jack of all trades would be helpful. She said in the past she was able to ask public works to help, now things like trimming are also not getting done in Parks and Rec because of low staffing in Public Works and adding parks adds more mowing.

Oliver said briefly going back to the Public Works staffing, it is important to note that the City has two detention facilities coming on line and that will mean more work for our Public Works department as well.

Oliver continued that council has made great strides in meeting personnel needs for the city by adding officers and night time staff for fire and what this discussion is meant to do is bring to council attention the other areas that are in desperate need of help going in to the next budget season. She said Parks and Recreation could use help as well, but is not as much of a priority as Public Works and Building Inspection.

Greteman said he would like to see one public works person added and one to the building department and to bring whatever is needed back.

Engineering Discussion

Oliver noted that recently the council requested information on how much the city paid engineers for services. Greteman said that he had requested this information and he was satisfied with the information that had been distributed, noting that Veenstra & Kimm is very thorough.

With no other inquiry from council, no further discussion is necessary at this time.

Water Project Discussion

Oliver reported that Hoskins has approached Randy Beavers, Warren Rural Water, about purchasing the capacity and the customers. There is not much capacity there for fire protection, just potable water.

Hoskins said he has met with Des Moines Water Works and their engineers will come back with multiple proposals for us to consider by the end of September. To date they have thrown out three different trunk line proposals - one at 50th and Countyline Road, one down Orilla Road, and another one coming from G14 on the other side of the interstate. The most favorable would be along the Cumming highway coming through Cumming almost directly to the tower.

Isley said coming from west makes sense because we are growing in that direction.

Phillips asked if there are deficiencies along Orilla Road related to water promises made during annexation. Hoskins answered yes in having access to city water.

Hoskins said last April the City Improvement Advisory Committee presented to council to put in the budget to do trunk line, which was approximately \$2 million, and to do the Warren Water Buyout.

Isley asked about approaching West Des Moines. Hoskins said West Des Moines is not interested in dealing with the city.

Greteman asked what the purpose of this trunk line is. Hoskins answered that the only water feed comes down Highway 28; if anything would happen to that water main or if there was a failure in the pump system the city would be without water. The trunk line would provide another source for water. In addition, the water tower does not have a direct feed to it. During peak usage, such as a significant fire, water tower capacity comes down and distribution system doesn't fill it up. This trunk line would provide a more direct feed to the tower.

Isley asked if the city would bond for this. Oliver answered yes and noted the City's current debt is a little over \$17 million for general obligation and the City has \$30 million in debt capacity. However, the water expenses would be a water revenue bond.

City Pool Discussion

Greteman said he would like to entertain a discussion about what the direction should be on the pool. He was there the night the presentation was made and; first of all, it was not a pool, it was a water park. It concerned him that the consultant making the presentation said a city should never expect to make more than 80% of what it costs to run the water park. He asked the other councilmembers if they want to put out direction asking a committee to come back with what they would like to see for \$3.5 million or whatever budget council sets.

Isley said it was the citizens committee who chose the options making it a water park and so expensive.

Greteman said he has not talked to anyone who has an appetite to spend that money; and asked where the council wants to go with a new swimming pool.

Oliver said she has asked Kuehl to work with the pool people to develop a cost estimate on what it would take to make the pool viable for another ten years. Greteman said he thinks that is a good plan.

Jackson stated he would support getting information on what it would take to get it up to snuff and maybe improve it a little to make it last for another ten years.

Phillips directed staff to be ready to present the data regarding the pool at the October study session.

Kuehl said next week American Leak Detection is coming to tell her where the pipes are leaking under the deck.

Livingston said she would also like to know what it would cost to scrap what we have, keep the same location, and dig a new pool that we can expand and share with the high school. Kuehl said \$4 million would probably get the city a little bit bigger pool and everything new. Kuehl added that people do not really want to swim; they want to play.

Phillips said that he thinks we need to acquire enough land to build a pool and then have enough land to add on when the time comes.

Jackson suggested that West Burlington just re-did a pool, so they may have some good information.

15-158 Delker moved, Greteman seconded, to **adjourn** meeting at 7:17 p.m. Voice vote carried unanimously.

Tom Phillips, Mayor

Attest:

Jodi Eddleman, City Clerk